in the context of the statute meant *purchase* and that the purchase of notes, bills of exchange, conditional sales contracts or similar paper from an affiliate was subject to the prohibitions of the statute. (1958 Federal Reserve Bulletin 260.) Further, the Board notes that the definition in section 23A is illustrative rather than exclusive. The Board believes that the purposes of section 23A justify a broad construction of the definition of *extension of credit* to include certain purchases of obligations, even though the purchases are not made at a discount from face value. A bank's financing of the working capital needs of a mortgage banking affiliate may occur through outright purchases of obligations, and the types of abuses with which section 23A is concerned are likewise possible in such circumstances, since such transactions between affiliates could result in an undue risk to the financial condition of the purchasing bank.

(c) The Board is of the opinion that the purchase by a member State bank of a mortgage note, or participation therein, from a mortgage banking affiliate would involve a loan or extension of credit to the affiliate if the latter had either made, or committed itself to make, the loan or extension of credit evidenced by the note prior to the time when the member bank first obligated itself, by commitment or otherwise, to purchase the loan or a participation therein. However, there would be no loan or extension of credit by the member bank to its mortgage banking affiliate if the member bank's commitment to purchase the loan, or a participation therein, is obtained by the affiliate within the context of a proposed transaction, or series of proposed transactions, in anticipation of the affiliate's commitment to make such loan(s), and is based upon the bank's independent evaluation of the credit worthiness of the mortgagor(s). In these latter circumstances, the member bank would be taking advantage of an investment opportunity rather than being impelled by any improper incentive to alleviate working capital needs of the affiliate that are directly attributable to excessive outstanding commitments.

(d) The Board cautions, however, that it would regard a blanket advance commitment by a member State bank to purchase from its mortgage banking affiliate a stipulated amount of loans, or an amount thereof exceeding defined credit lines of the affiliate, that bears no reference to specific proposed transactions, as involving an unsound banking practice, unless the commitment is conditioned upon compliance of loans made thereunder with the requirements of section 23A. It would not suffice to condition such a commitment upon the bank's ultimate approval of the credit standing of the various mortgagors. That blanket commitment would have the inherent tendency, in the context of an affiliate relationship, to cause the bank to relax sound credit judgment concerning the individual loans involved when the affiliate was in need of bank financing, thereby resulting in an inappropriate risk to the soundness of the bank.

(Interprets and applies 12 U.S.C. 371c)

[39 FR 28975, Aug. 13, 1974]

§ 250.260 Miscellaneous interpretations; gold coin and bullion.

The Board has received numerous inquiries from member banks relating to the repeal of the bank on ownership of gold by United States citizens. Listed below are questions and answers which affect member banks and relate to the responsibilities of the Federal Reserve System.

(a) May gold in the form of coins or bullion be counted as vault cash in order to satisfy reserve requirements? No. Section 19(c) of the Federal Reserve Act requires that reserve balances be satisfied either by a balance maintained at the Federal Reserve Bank or by vault cash, consisting of United States currency and coin. Gold in bullion form is not United States currency. Since the bullion value of United States gold coins far exceeds their face value, member banks would not in practice distribute them over the counter at face value to satisfy customer demands.

(b) Will the Federal Reserve Banks perform services for member banks with respect to gold, such as safekeeping or assaying? No.

(c) Will a Federal Reserve Bank accept gold as collateral for an advance to a member bank under section 10(b) of the Federal Reserve Act? No.

[39 FR 45254, Dec. 31, 1974]

BANK SERVICE ARRANGEMENTS

§ 250.300 Kinds of bank servicers subject to Board examination under the Bank Service Corporation Act.

Summary. The performance of bank services for State member banks is subject to the Board's regulation and examination, regardless of the nature of the bank servicer, including servicers that are national banks; State nonmember insured banks; nonprofit, no-stock credit card servicing organizations; and servicing subsidiaries of bank holding companies.

Text. (a) Since the enactment of the Bank Service Corporation Act (the ''Act'') (12 U.S.C. 1861–1865), the Board has on several occasions considered whether performance of ''bank services'' (as that term is defined in section 1(b) of the Act) for State member banks is subject to regulation and examination by the Board under section 5 of the Act if—

(1) The bank servicer is not a ''bank service corporation'' (as that term is defined in the Act), or

(2) The bank servicer is a bank itself. In each instance, based on the reasoning set forth below, the Board expressed the view that section 5 of the Act applied to any organization that performed bank services for State member banks, including national banks; another State member bank; State nonmember insured banks; servicing subsidiaries of bank holding companies; and non-profit, no stock credit card servicing organizations.

(b) The Senate Committee on Banking and Currency stated with regard to section 5 of the Act, as enacted in 1962, that the Federal supervisory agencies ''must be able to examine all of the banks' records, and they must be able to exercise proper supervision over all the banks' activities, whether performed by the banks' employees on their premises or by anyone else on or off the banks' premises. This examination and this supervision cannot be frustrated by a transfer of the banks' records to some other organization or by having some other organization carry out all or part of the banks' functions.'' (S. Rep. No. 2105, 87th Cong. 3 (1962)). Similarly, the Committee on Banking and Currency of the House of Representatives stated that ''it would obviously be unwise to permit banks to avoid the examination and supervision of vital banking functions by the simple expedient of farming out such functions.'' (H.R. Rep. No. 2062, 87th Cong. 3 (1962)).

(c) Section 5 of the Act is not limited by its terms to *bank service corporations* as defined in the Act; nor, in the Board's opinion based on the legislative history of the Act, should such a limitation be implied. The Board concludes that the performance of bank services for State member banks by organizations that are not bank service corporations is also subject to Board regulation and examination.

(d) If the bank servicer is a national bank or a State nonmember insured bank, its performance of bank services for State member banks is subject to Board regulation and examination, despite the fact that the servicer is subject primarily to regulation and examination by one of the other Federal banking agencies. By the same token, the performance of bank services by a State member bank for a national bank or State nonmember insured bank is subject to regulation and examination by the Comptroller of the Currency or the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, respectively. The purpose of section 5 of the Act is to make certain that the appropriate Federal banking agency will be able effectively to exercise its responsibilities with respect to a bank subject primarily to its supervision.

(e) It is important to note that the scope of the Board's regulation and examination under section 5 of the Act does not extend to all affairs of the bank servicer, but only to the *bank services* performed for a State member bank and only to the same extent as if the services were being performed by the State member bank itself on its own premises.

[44 FR 12969, Mar. 9, 1979]